

## **SPLM-N denies rejection of U.S. humanitarian proposition**

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January 20, 2017 (PARIS) - The Sudan People's liberation Movement -North (SPLM-N) Friday has denied refusing a proposition providing that USAID would transport humanitarian medical assistance to the civilian populations in the war affected areas in Blue Nile and South Kordofan states.



Last Wednesday, Ambassador Donald Booth criticized the SPLM-N refusal of the humanitarian proposal, saying they should put their people first not their political ambitions. He also stressed on the need to not hold Sudanese armed groups "in unquestioned high esteem".

"It is not true that the Movement has rejected the U.S. proposal, but we called to amend it. The truth also there are two proposals, one by (the chief mediator) Thabo Mbeki including the crossing point of Asosa and the other is the American proposal," said SPLM-N Secretary General Yasir Arman who was speaking in a press conference of the Sudan Call forces in Paris.

"We did not reject it and we have the correspondence with him. We called to improve the proposal based on our bitter experiences with the (Sudanese) regime. We asked for an external border crossing point, ensuring that no manipulation to the internal crossing and to guarantee the arrival of relief to the needy according to specific mechanisms," he added.

"There was not enough time to continue the dialogue, as Obama's term is coming to an end. A new administration will come and we will cooperate with it," further stressed Arman who is the SPLM-N chief negotiator.

Booth had hopes that the Sudanese warring parties in the Two Areas sign a humanitarian access agreement enabling aid groups to reach the civilians in the rebel controlled zones before the end of Obama term.

Such agreement if signed would also pave the way for further negotiations on a peace agreement and an inclusive constitutional conference in Sudan.

Arman expressed the SPLM-N readiness to work with the new U.S. administration to discuss all these proposals to address the humanitarian issue and to stop war in Sudan.

The government refuses a proposal by the SPLM-N to allow 20% of the relief materials to reach the rebel affected areas from Asosa, an Ethiopian town of the border with the Blue Nile State.

The SPLM-N says they did a lot of concessions to reach a humanitarian agreement with Khartoum, adding it is Khartoum to blame for its intransigence.

Arman stressed that the SPLM-N is committed to peace as a strategic goal, but "the government does not want peace" and did not offer something to end the over-five-year conflict.

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This material is distributed by Esther Sprague on behalf of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement North. Additional information is available at the Department of Justice, Washington, DC.